(c) if so, how Government propose to safeguard the interest of the farming community?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (c) India has been following the policy of economic liberalization since 1991. There has been no unusual increase in imports except in edible oils, which has contributed to decline in prices of edible oils in domestic markets. In order to protect the interest of the famers market interventions are made to procure agricultural commodities covered under MSP Scheme and Market Intervention Scheme (MIS), if their prices fall below MSP or the price fixed under MIS. The Government is implementing scheme for various cropss in which farmers including small and marginal farmers are given assistance of various types. The Government has been monitoring imports of sensitive agricultural commodities and takes action to regulate the import and, as and when necessary, import duties are increased.

So far as indebtedness of farmers is concerned, no national level study of indebtedness has been carried out by National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO), after 1992. Thus, it may not be possible to assess the increase or decrease of the same durinng the last decade during which liberalization has taken place. The Government has initiated a number of specific steps to reduce the indebtedness of farmers. These include introduction of crop insurance, re-scheduling of loans in events of natural calamity, and enhancing the profitability of agriculture through increase in productivity.

Differing production rates of irrigated and non-irrigated lands

†5418. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN' :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a wide gap has been noticed between production rate of irrigated land and that of non-irrigated land;

(b) if so, whether Government have assessed this gap; and

(c) if so, the details of this gap in the production rate of wheat, paddy, sugarcance oilseeds and pulses?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (c) The estimates of average yield rates separately for Irrigated and unirrigated area are not generated.

Training to Cane Growers

5419. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that lack of availability of manufacturing prototypes, improper field and crop conditions, lack of technical know-how of the mechanics and operators, the cane growers have not been able to achieve better results of their produce;

(b) if so, what steps have been taken by Government to impart necessary training to farmers on these aspects;

(c) whether sugar industry's involvement in the matter has also been examined; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (d) There are various factors which determine the economic returns to the cane growers. Agricultural equipment for tillage, inter-culture, plant protection and irrigation operations are commercially available in the country for the use of farmers including sugarcane growers. Subsidy is also available to the farmers for the purchasse of agricultural equipment under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Macro-Management of Agriculture. Specialized equipment for planting and stubble shaving have also been developed. Two projects,under Mission Mode of the National Agricultural Technology Project, namely, Prototype manufacturing of Agricultural Implemennts and Mechanization of Intensive Irrigated Agriculture for Sugarcane Production have been approved. These projects are in operation in different parts of the country. The Indian Council of Agricultural Research have informed that they have developed linkages with the sugar industry. Training is also being arranged to the farmers in the selection, operation, maintenance and management of various kinds of agricultural machinery. Some of the sugar mills have imported Sugarcane harvesters for the purpose of trails, evaluation and introduction in the country.